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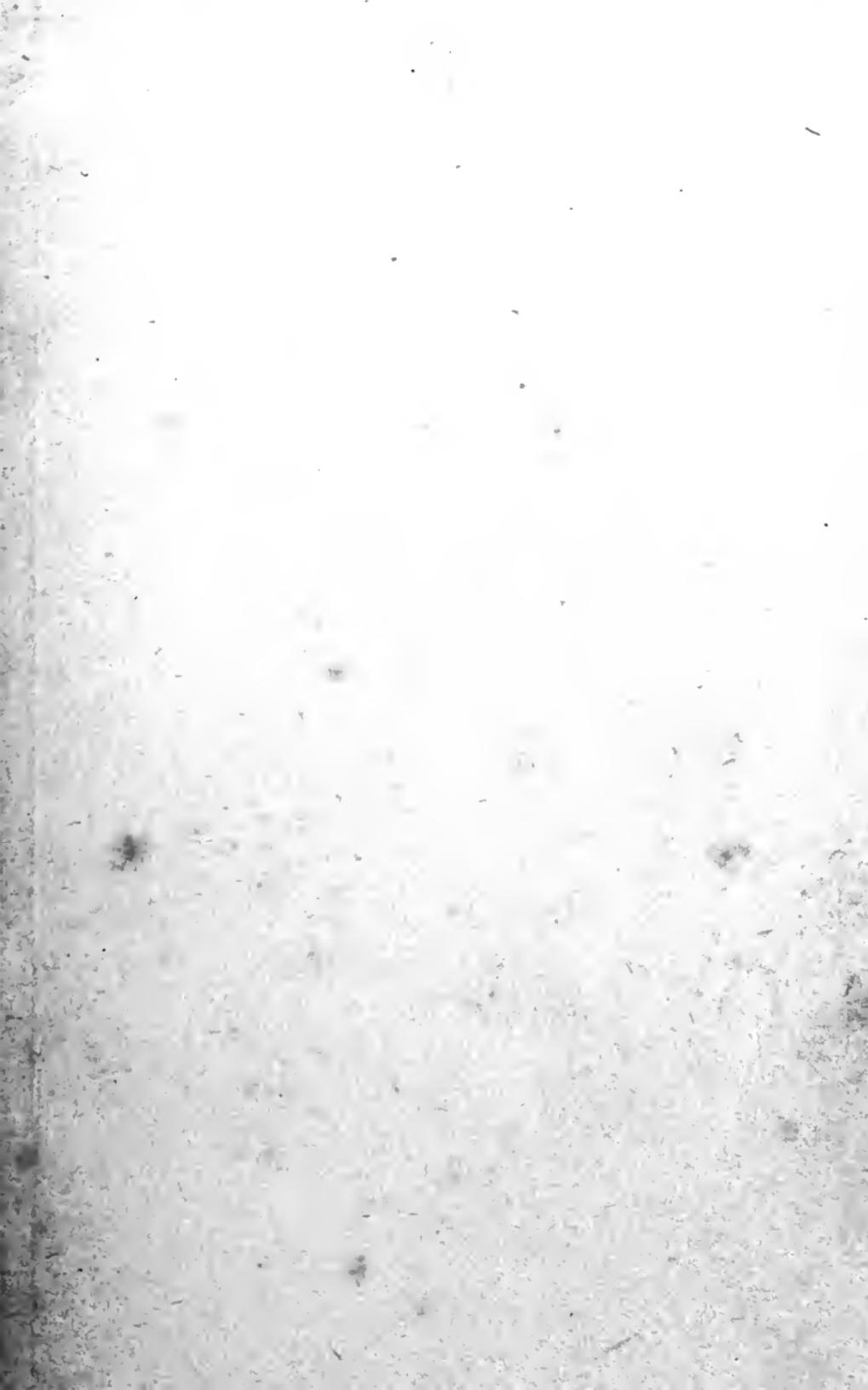
To Gus.
from the author
W.S.T.



THE CHILD OF TIME #









THE CHILD OF TIME
ETC.

by
W. S. J.

Cover Design by
VERNON HILL



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DEDICATION

The Pendant

A little ship,
Voyaging brave and trim,
Within a golden rim,
Your heart, downcast, elate,
 Makes rise and dip.
When all the stars are dim,
Hold on for love of him
Whose life and fortunes freight
 Your little ship.



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The Child of Time.

Tugging "O Nana, come along!"

Dragging "O wait a bit!"

The child complains his childish wrong—

Nurse will not hear of it.

Why must she always walk so slow?

Butterflies go so quick!

Why must she always hurry so?

Such lots of flowers to pick!

Weary at last, with tearful face,

"I wish I'd never come—"

But old Nurse Time, at steady pace,

Leads him the long road home.

In the Cage.

His cage companions, all, go hustling by,
With careless leap and fling ;
He sits with wrinkled brow and upturned eye,
As mutely wondering.

All share and share alike the heat and smell,
The scufflings on the floor,
Their fleas, their garbage, and their wives as well -
Can he want something more ?

What is his difference ? Would he scale the bars.
Beyond the daily wont ?
Or does he wake at night and want the stars,
When other monkeys don't ?

Perhaps these laud the Keeper when they screech
While this one is a rebel.
Perhaps to all that's fine in monkey speech
He's deaf as any pebble.

Perhaps they hold that they will be enlarged,
Which he must needs deny ;
And suffers as they suffer who are charged
With guilt of blasphemy.

No doubt he thinks that it's his soul aglow,
That makes him doubt and question.
A monkey hasn't got the sense to know
It's simply indigestion.

Meanwhile his oddness brings him many a tweak
He bears with patient rage.
And yet he may be sad, poor little freak,
When he must leave the cage.

The Dial.

Time's round is marked in lead
 Above the sill,
But winter clouds are spread,
 And Time stands still.

The sun is off this place
 Where we would meet,
When summer lent it grace,
 Then Time was fleet.

About the dial goes
 A mocking text . .
And yet my heart, God knows,
 Is little vexed.

Summer may come again,
 And wings that rove,
But Time shall look in vain
 For one I love.

The sun forgets this place,
 By love forgot;
The dial lifts its face,
 Time marks it not.

Lavender filled this court,
But now cut down.
The fountain makes cold sport,
The green is brown.

O hurried Time, who sped
The happy day !
O laggard—shod with lead,
Now eve is grey !

O careless Time, you run
An easy race !
We shadows fail. The sun
Is off this place.

Vera Effigies.

Is it he—this sprawled white plan ?
Grass grows about it, and through.
Did I know much more of the man ?
If this be the man that I knew.

He was always ugly as sin,
And you never could know his mind.
He was masked from the love of his kin,
And masked was his love of mankind.

The flies may settle, nor tease.
They cannot light on his face.
He lies in negligent ease,
And none need grudge him his place.

I can touch where the iron passed
Through the mask that ever bewrayed.
It clung so close at the last,
That this was almost betrayed.

He suffered, so let him scoff.
I screen him again with the sod,
For now that the mask is off
He grins at man, and at God.

Quidnunc, 1914.

It reached his slum, the insistent cry so loud
For help and service— *Your country's need*
to-day—
He shuffled round the outskirts of the crowd,
Gazed with dull eyes, heard, spat, and moved
away.
Crime, cruelty, famine, murder unashamed—
Back to his slum, rubbing each festering sore—
Homes blasted, woman outraged, childhood
maimed
The bl—dy fools. He knew it all before.

A Calendar of Crutches.

The roofs may lie in quilted snow,
June lilac scent the heated air,
Sky mark the Spring that town may know,
Or leaf turn yellow in the square,

Come broken things the shop must mend.
(So slow to mend, so quick to maim !)

Crutches and crutches without end.
Time goes on crutches, he is lame.

The red-cross cars in humming row,
The laden lorry in the mire,
The man in blue who walks so slow,
The woman in the man's attire—

(The men in blue who move so slow,
Or stop and look aloft and scan
Swift wings that clothe the strong, but know
Our crutches for the broken man,) —

The children waging mimic war,
The insistent placard on the wall,
The sudden searchlight raking far ;—
These mark the calendar for all.

A Calendar of Crutches

Time limps. One morning know a hush
Expectant. Windless sky, and clear.
The casements leap ; and, with a rush,
Red war is on us, instant, here.

With quickened heart and upturned face
Stands each, and all things stand and stop.
A bloody trail and a cordoned place—
Back to the shop, work for the shop !

The drill-heads drone, the hammers beat :
Work renewed is the workshop's heed.
Outside, the talk of men in the street,
“ It brings it home—”

Ah ! was there need ?

Chloe at the Zoo,

Little heiress of the ages,
Daughter of a long descent,
Dancing by the narrow cages
Where each rough experiment,
Labelled part of Nature's working,
Deftly made but still to mend,
Dimly shows the something lurking
She would fashion to her end.

Seeming careless, ever careful,
From her workshop many a chip ;
Shapes grotesque of fauna fearful
Made in pride of apprenticeship.

Scale and fin, and fur and feather,
Showed the purpose working through,
Ere the pieces came together,
And the workshop looked on you !

Little heiress of the ages,
Now we gather what She meant.
Read, as plain as Gwillim's pages
How your quarterings are blent.

From the mould that never hardens,
Comes the latest birth of time,
Chloe dancing in the gardens—
And the world is still at prime !

Chloe at the Zoo.

Chloe mixing all the labels
In that jumbly-box her brain,
Seeks the beasts that made the fables ;
Did they really speak, quite plain ?

What's that called ? Is *that* a tortoise ?
Can I ride upon the whale ?
(Ancient carapace support us !
As of old in Vedic tale.)

Tiny Eve, in Eden straying,
Here's a moral I'm afraid ;
Chloe, when you go a-maying
There's a world to be re-made.

Heavier than Galapagos
Ever bore upon his shell,
Is the burden—but away goes
Chloe and my breath as well !

Heedless of instruction oral,
She is fled beyond my ban ;
I must even drop my moral
And catch Chloe if I can.

Awakening,

Where was that woodland where I strayed in June,
Magical, hushed, with gleam and shadow fretted,
Until I saw, beyond the tranced confine,
Dusty and white, beneath the afternoon,
Out through the last green leafage silhouetted,
A long road burn, nor knew the road was mine ?

Now I must wake from you who were my dreaming,
To meet the real in the doors of day,
And sharp-edged life comes in with cold accost.
To touch me through the severed veil of seeming
And set my steps on the departing way,
I see my road and know that I am lost.

A Memorial Service.

Secure but from my proper scorn,
I, and I only, in this place,
Once knew the man these hundreds mourn
Who never saw his living face.

There is no witness here to tell
The hand withheld, the painful stand.
He struggled, he advanced, he fell.
The hand withheld, this black-gloved hand.

There comes the voice of cynic doubt ;
“ Selfish is selfish to the end.
What you refused, he did without.
What you regret is—such a friend.”

Am I not sorry for his sake ?
“ You are but sorry for your own.
The little that he did not take ;
The much, if only you had known.”

Remorse to me, to him release.
Time, to his name, sees justice done ;
Gives his great heart its dreamless ease,
And to this other, years to run.

Yet Irony will mock remorse ;
“ You cling to a dishonoured age.”
But slow Death, on his errant course,
Will find sin waiting for its wage.

Dusk.

(“ L'écho dans son coin accroupi.” *Gautier*)

An early dusk is gathered in ;
A doubtful star shows overhead ;
The ground the conquering shadows win,
Confines me to the ground I tread.

Still Night advancing, wave on wave,
Brings her horizons near, and makes
A silence of the voices, save
Where Echo in her corner wakes.

A bygone day which sinks to rest
Yet echoes round the vacant house ;
Or lights with embers of the west
Some blinded window's heavy brows.

My vistas fade from gold to gray,
And take such shape as shadows weave ;
Things unremembered steal away,
And changeling memories deceive.

The shining vistas that I planned,
To arch the years that came and went,
As leafless avenues must stand ;
I scarce can gaze where once I went.

Some are all dim with long disuse,
Or stand defaced, in age and shame ;
And one, still bright with dying hues,
Was never but an empty frame.

Dusk

From every aspect of the thought,
Each outlook of my wish and mood,
Rayed its long prospect richly-wrought ;
But life still came the way it would.

For Fancy, in her fairy coach,
The trellised trees would lightly toss,
In joyous crowd at her approach,
Their jewelled sunlight on the moss.

But Love still found the way he'd take—
The light-foot love whose path is lost :
The thorn and thicket of the brake
Yield passage only to his ghost.

As ghosts they walk the darkened earth,
The shapes of love. I see again
The mother-love that gave me birth,
The earliest love of all true men.

The years have taken heavy toll—
Bright-eyed, with sweet swift smile, apart
She walks her garden of the soul,
One hand upon a troubled heart.

Dusk.

With love as friend again I walk,
And share his store who nothing hid,
But gave it all in generous talk,
Or open hand ; I stand amid

His terraced roses, see below
A town of spires that meet the rain :
Or sated summers drifting slow
By island-orchards of the Seine.

The vivid figures come and go,
And smile, and charm, and take recall,
Like masquers in a voiceless show,
Who play a moonlit pastoral.

Beyond the level realms of law,
A happy spirit, young and bold,
Follows the vision once he saw,
Unchartered forests, virgin gold,

Until a thirsty desert sand
Has slaked the hot Australian blood.

Kind voices, welcome face and hand,
Clear eyes of love that understood.

Suddenly streams the Roll of Fame !
French, of the very soil of France,
A flaming soul goes up in flame,
In flame and thunder—but Advance.

And now—their numbers catch the breath—
Comes on strong gust from every clime,
That Youth whose eager race for death,
Oldens our world before its time.

Dusk.

Familiar faces follow fast,
Upon the paler sorrows, fled,
Till life looks emptied at the last,
And none seems dead where all are dead.

I pace my straightened vantage-ground,
So nigh where sweeps the ghostly rout :
Blind use still guides the narrow round ;
I linger till the play be out.

Irrevocable hour and deed
Down the dark ways cry faint and far ;
The dreams diminish and recede,
And pass ; but leave the gates ajar.

I linger with the poor remains,
Where plenty leaves a sharpened dearth ;
An afterglow on western panes,
But whitened ashes on the hearth.

Black night advances, wave on wave,
And all within her frontier sleeps,
And all is won and silenced, save
Where Echo in her corner keeps.

Against the night one gleaming mark—
A marble term, of pallid front,
Rises from out the velvet dark :
The Term of Visions—*Exeunt.*

From a Back Window.

The lusty sun is bright, beyond her wall.
What coloured world may feel his ardours fall ?

Outward she strives to lean.
Still in the shadow, marks his perfect noon
Betray the presence of the maiden moon,
Pale wraith till then unseen.

Poor maid, she thinks, who journeys cold and gray
Till there be one to light her on her way !

The glory sinks and veers ;
She sees earth fade, a moon majestic move,
Radiant and proud, the Sun-god's only love,
And dreams, and dreams with tears.

They also Serve.

He has a vision of her face,
 Of love, and love that is to come ;
Enduring right, and pride of race,
 And all the settled world of home.
He dreams and smiles. The dawn is grey.
 He dreams of dawn. But overhead
The vulture-speck has marked its prey,
 Has found him dreaming, leaves him dead.

She stands, and sees with open eyes,
 The empty future robbed of joy,
The unborn life, his sacrifice,
 The straightened means, the hard employ ;
And dumbly turns her to her task,
 To serve, and save, and face the years,
Night granting all that she may ask,
 An hour when none may see her tears.

O Light of Fame that shall not fade,
 From annals of the myriad dead,
How interwoven with the shade
 On countless lives uncomforted !
Not theirs alone, the hard-fought day,
 Who die to purchase Peace at last,
But also Theirs who live to pay,
 Having no vision but the Past.

The Dream Come True.

Fear met the child in dreams.
A shade had fallen on his play-room floor,
He was alone—and Something at the door
Froze his light limbs, and struck his outcry dumb.
A dreadful Thing was coming, coming . . . Come !
But no ! The night was spent.
The dream would break.

Fear met the child in dreams.
But day, and gentle voices broke the spell.
The dream returns, the dream he knew so well :
The darkened world, the playmates fled away,
The Door, the Passage—and he, alone, must stay
The Coming of the Event.
Nor can he wake.

The Daily Messenger.

The restless water's lapping rim
 Licks with long tongue its earthen vase ;
A little wave runs up the brim,
 The sea is higher than it was.

The wind goes sighing through the wood,
 The branches stir and settle as
A leaf down drops from where it stood.
 The wood is barer than it was.

The boy comes loitering up the lane,
 A penny pays for all he has.
A white face and a shuttered pane,
 And earth is darker than it was.

The Heritage.

Their lot is one, they still are two.

She broods and smiles with downcast eyes ;
He ponders what is yet to do,
And what is done dissatisfies.

His vision will not let him rest,
She nurses what her hands may hold.
He sees the glitter on the crest,
She knows that what she has is gold.

He urges the unceasing chase,
She takes the present for her scheme,
And makes to-day her dwelling place.
He shapes the future to his dream.

Enough for her to shape what is,
To glorify the child she bears ;
To take the imprint of his kiss,
And mould a life, and meet the years.

Towards the insuperable line,
Where far horizons yet divide,
Wanders the Discontent divine,
Content, dear human, by his side.

An Afternoon Call.

Near me in town lives a woman I've known
For years, in a sort of way.
Her eyes, which follow a happiness flown,
Her distant eyes, are grey.

We are not acquainted overmuch ;
She gives me a hand, with grace ;
I kiss her child, nor breathing, touch
Her face in the little face.

I shall never know where her longing lies.
We talk, on letters and art.
But I know the hunger I see in her eyes,
For I have it in my heart.

I turn from her door with a sober face,
Assured of her kind regard.
My place in hell is a separate place,
So I leave my visiting card.

The Prisoner.

In man's dark chronicles I read—
A history of rack and chain,
Whose very pages seem to bleed—
Of one who lay in thirst and pain,
And heard, to his embitterment,
A stream, hard by, run cool and clear ;
And cursed the devilish intent
That spread his couch of pain so near.

The tale is old, the ill is done,
The times have past from night to day ;
And liberty of thought, hard-won,
Has loosed the prisoner on his way.

Alas ! I know him prisoner yet,
He still despairs, nor hears the voice
In act and freedom say "forget,"
In sun and flowers say "rejoice."

The world his gaol, he still is bond,
Still groans and thirsts; and still, in vain,
The healing waters roll beyond
The torture chamber of the brain.

The Nightmare of God.

On the eternal stream that knows
 Nor fount, nor course, nor bourne ;
Motionless moves, nor stays, nor goes,
 Only without return,

A bubble for a moment flecks
 The great flood's still expanse :
Its idle rings disperse, nor vex
 The vast unseen advance.

As Life and Time begin and cease,
 An eddy in the stream,
Maybe that God's eternal peace
 Is broken with a dream.

And even as the bubbles break,
 And yield their little breath,
The mirrored light they lose and take,
 Marking their life and death,

Age unto age, in finite time,
 He sees his avatars,
God unto god succeeding, climb
 The cycle of the stars.

• • • • • • • •

Each mows His earth with sweeping scythe,
 And sows the ground with salt ;
Prone in the dust the nations writhe,
 And praise Him and exalt.

Full hecatomb of human lives
 Pours Him libation sweet,
Priests leap, and gash themselves with knives
 About His reeking feet.

Across the peoples overthrown,
 He drives with flowing rein,
Nor leaves a stone upon a stone.
 God's ways are very plain.

The Nightmare of God.

His voice is heard, His hand is seen,
For God is God for each ;
A flaming brand to strike, or screen,
Within His shadow's reach.

He hears a music of men's groans,
He sees, with flattered eyes,
Their tribute to His heavy thrones,
The smoking sacrifice.

Pestilence, famine, fire and sword,
Proclaim His ancient Right ;
His lightning wrath, and thunder word,
Fitfully break the night.

There is one God ! His arm unsheathes
The sword of Allah, wroth ;
He swings Thor's hammer ; and He breathes
The fecund word of Thoth.

The world that wails the death of Pan,
Saw Saturn dispossessed.

Man kneels before each Larger Man
In God's assumption drest.

A chosen people, now unmeet,
Expects His kingdom come,
But on Jehovah's storied seat
Camp the strong gods of Rome.

And where stern Jahveh's voice of fear
Called them to strict account,
Another age shall, wond'ring, hear
The Sermon on the Mount.

From out the burning bush His word,
From out the sacred grove ;
Behind the Temple veil o'erheard,
Or where His prophets rove.

The Nightmare of God

Prophet and king, and priest, and saint,
Temple, and grove, and ark.

Beetle, and bird, and fish, and beast,
Marked with His sacred mark,

And myriad gods from out the East
A cloud of witness bear

To the strong working of His yeast,
The ferment of His fear.

Thammuz is slain, and Jesus slain;
Mithra and Balder pass;

Too fair for death, they live again,
Wither and spring like grass.

Asgard, Olympus,—tale and song
Each fabled haunt and home;

The Gods migrate, the nations throng
Benares, Mecca, Rome.

Now leaving hundred gods to hear
One god with hundred tongues,
Each lists his own interpreter,
All cry their thousand wrongs.

Victor in arms, the victor's lust
Proclaims the will of God.

The fallen foe who bites the dust
Yet bows beneath His rod.

The ancient terrors of His name
Lie sleeping in the sword.

Once more the world-wide wars proclaim
Man's worship of his Lord.

We, troubles of His dream, who last
Until His dawn shall break,

Pray, when the dream be overpast,
That God may stir, and wake.

Science v The Humanities.

Tenant am I of a narrow chamber,
But artists and craftsmen its walls have drest,
And up to the ceiling the bookshelves clamber
To carry a cohort of all earth's best.

As with sweets that the living flower loses
Cell upon cell is the hive fulfilled,
The world-alembic, without, reduces
Its light and heat to a store distilled.

Here the sun pours in from his rising,
Rending the veils from the dubious day ;
Mellowing, heartening, somewhere surprising
A tarnished gilding from grave to gay.

Some tell me the sun will fade my pictures,
Injure my bindings, invade their trust ;
Some for my treasures reserve their strictures—
Rubbish that harbours disease and dust.

"Stick your lumber down in the basement,
'Sweep and wash and white-wash your room—'"
The others would have me close my casement,
"Live in the past, come what may come."

Science v The Humanities

Must I moulder along with a rotting record ?

Shutter my window against the day ?

With a chain of tradition to make me a neck-cord,

Hang and decay from a trunk in decay ?

Or repeat the Alexandrian ravage

To feed retorts ? Start a new Year One ?

See man, an efficient unhistoried savage,

Swarm in the forcing-house of the sun ?

Surely, so surely as knowledge gathered

Slowly converts to a wisdom gained,

It was the wisdom gained that fathered

The desire for knowledge of what remained.

So open my window, set back each curtain,

To every breath and to every ray ;

For none, whatever his store, may be certain

Of the seed or the need of the coming day.

The Storm.

Now Dame Nature cleans her house—
Forth with furious besom sweeps,
And her little son must rouse ;
Fearfully he hides and peeps.
Opens all the windows wide,
Strews the floors with leaves and sand,
Whirls her broom with vigorous hand,
Down it comes with thumps and thuds,
The air is full of flying suds ;
Nowhere left to hide.

Turning all things out of doors,
Dashing water from her pail,
Across the ceiling and the floors
Rubbish flies like hail.
She is looking black as black ;
In her tub his litter floats ;
She will sink his cockle boats ;
Take the clouds along the brink,
Rolls of washing black as ink,
Wash, and put them back.

Whips the wash from off the sills,
Drags it, crumpled, stretched, and torn,
Flings it down upon the hills,
Leaves it there till morn.
Whirls and whirls her angry mop ;
Takes his ocean in her hand,
Pours it out upon the land,
Shakes him like an angry nurse
Threatens him with something worse ;
Where's she going to stop ?

The Storm

Now at last her weary hand
Lays the broom and stays the draught,
Mops the water and the sand,
Sets the tub to sail the craft ;
Gathers up the linen too,
Hangs it out to take the light,
Folds on folds of billowy white ;
Smooths it flat upon the plain,
Lays, and rolls it up again ;
Look, it's stained with blue !

All her raiment, wrung and clean,
Keeps its colours fast ;
Gossamer veil, of finest screen,
Yet will wash and last ;
There are pearls along its mesh,
Diamonds too, for now the skies
Smile again from out her eyes,
Shining brighter than before ;
The happy child upon the floor
Starts his play afresh.

Two Creations.

It was a God devised an ape,
Finite, and, foul, and dull ;
Set him on earth, without escape,
To grow himself a soul.

At length erect, the painful ape,
Within his narrow skull,
Devised a God, and gave him shape
Both Good and Beautiful.

A Heart for Any Fate.

"Wir Deutschen fürchten nichts, nur Gott allein."

Wir fürchten nichts—we wear man's semblance
still,

And cry him "*Kamerad*" when things go ill.
Nur Gott allein—and Him, that only Fear.
We long ago disproved—*Was fürchten wir?*

Scientia Illuminatio Mea.

Man, purblind in the days of yore,
Has got him two new eyes :
The microscope, to search the floor,
The telescope, the skies.

His cry, when groping in the night,
Was different from ours :
The dying sage would ask " more light "
We call for " higher powers."

Her Hour.

This was her hour
O listening wood
Where she so often strayed
Or stood
With upturned gaze,
Straight as the saplings of your glade,
As fair, as young !
She knew these ways.
Cherish her shade within your shade ;
Whisper in woodland tongue
Her name, her praise,
Now when faint day retreats, and night makes good,
This was her hour.

This was her hour,
O empty vale,
Her shelter when she slept,
The sacred pale
Meeting her eyes
When her eyes joyed or wept.
By day and night
She knew your barriers rise ;
Green guardian hills where swept
Her spirit's flight.
Circle her memory, guard, imparadise.
Dian is bright, and all the valley pale—
This was her hour.

Her Hour.

This was her hour
O waiting beach
Once dimpled by her feet,
Vainly you reach,
You waves that laved and kist,
Vainly retreat !
Here would her steps repair
When the world wist.
Never your waves shall greet
Daughter of earth more fair.
Dian unrivalled now sails down the list ;
But in your whispering speech
This was her hour.

Blinded.

I sit in the window-seat,
Or they put my stick in my hand,
And I take a turn up the street,
And I come again to a stand.

I could wish I had never seen.
When my fingers grope their way
It's the vision that comes between
That makes them fumble and stray.

For when you put out your hand
To touch a thing that you know,
You'd think it would understand—
At least it used to be so.

But now it is all to learn,
Like a child that has just begun,
The things won't serve your turn,
But let you down with a run.



Blinded.

I remember, when I could see,
She was shy, and looked away ;
But now she looks at me,
And always has plenty to say.

I can feel her looking at me,
And her voice is kind and near ;
But it's not what it used to be,
And it's not what I want to hear.

I could wish I had never known.
When she comes with me on my way
It is then that I feel alone ;
It is night because it is day.

* * * * *

So I sit in my window-seat,
Or they put my stick in my hand,
And I take a turn up the street,
And I come again to a stand.

The Religion of Humanity.

God can do all things—man does what he can.
God breathes life into the ape, man must
make him man.
Man must ever satisfy the Heaven sent desire,
Comes the killing cold and man must wake the
saving fire.
Comes the cruel hunger, and man must find
him food,
Every evil thing he meets, turning it to good.
Compassed round with waters, man yet made
the ark.
Medicine against the ill, lamp within the dark.
Dirt, disease and danger have plagued him
over much.
God has made the cripple, but man has made
the crutch.
Naked and prone He made him, weakest of
things
Man stands erect, arrayed, clothed with mighty
things.
All things, God has made them, but all things
man must mend,
For God was the beginning, but man shall see
the end.

CHRISTMAS CARDS.



I.

The Season spreads its gay decoy ;
No wiser is your care and haste ;
Rest, and be thankful, and enjoy
The Moment's halt amid the Waste.
O may, for you, the losel Year,
Who spent his silver moons so fast,
From out his lost and chequered gear,
Leave something not too bright to last !

II.

This comes to give you Greeting true,
As early as the Day begins,
Although the Wish is far from new,
And in the ancient Way begins,
With *Happy Christmas, all Good Will*,
Thereon a *Glad New Year to you*,
And, should a Wish be wanting still,
The Wish that we were near to you.
But blame not, Friend, the hackneyed tone ;
You must forgive a touch of it ;
Did we but offer of our Own,
You could not think so much of it.
For Things grow hallowed in the Use,
Whose Past is but a Wraith in them !
Yet save them from the last Abuse
The Simple who have Faith in them.
So ere, with Memories faintly stirred,
You turn to Things remote again,
Think kindly on a kindly Word :
You'll hear the primal Note again.
Who love the Old, though they be few.
May chance to have the Best of it ;
For what is true is seldom new ;
Our Friendship stands in test of it.

III.

The Keepers of Christmas, 1915

They keep their land untrodden,
They keep her unbested,
But Flemish soil is sodden,
And Pontic seas are red.

This Day to which we waken,
For every joy fulfilled
A toll from these is taken,
An English heart is stilled.

We save, what they are spending,
We watch, what they sustain ;
We wait the Epic's ending,
They write the rubric plain.

We hold in sheltered meeting
Their gift, the ransomed feast ;
They part, and give us greeting,
And turn them to the East.

No feast without atoning ;
For every bite and sup
A grace is said with groaning,
A life is rendered up.

The faith that does not reason,
The love that casts out fear,
Keeps safe the Children's Season,
Brings on the Golden Year.

The Infinite Prolongation of Jones.

Jones goes each day to Mincing Lane,
 Tube, office, chop at one,
Office once more, and tube again,
 And Jones's day is done.

Comes dinner, evening paper, and
 Eight hours beside his wife,
Breakfast and tube—One day may stand
 For Jones's yearly life.

On Sundays in his church he prays,
 He prays with slumbrous eye:
“Grant me, Almighty, length of days,
 And then Eternity.”

Quorum Pars Magna.

He takes his passage on the Underground,
With his small mirror of the world's big round,
His ha'penny journal's paged and pictured show.
Of what goes on above he reads below.
A province conquered. Wonders where it is.
Gold mines discovered. Wishes they were his.
Our youngest minister. What luck he has !
Our new Pro-consul. What a job it was !
Reads of the writers whom he never reads,
Stares at the doers of the latest deeds,
Laughs at the dreamers ere the dreams come true,
And takes for truth whatever news is new.
Skips Art and Letters, in one column, signed,
And notes the ads. upon the page behind,
Where patient Science with her load of ore,
Drudges outside the Patent Office door.
Arrived, he glances at the gleaming way
That lately drew him from the dark to day ;
A sudden glory swells his little span ;
“ How great we are ! How wonderful is man ! ”

A Fable.

A nature lover lately stood
Upon a common, near a wood,
And gazing skyward, off his guard,
Was quoting from his favourite bard—

*"My heart leaps up when I behold
A Rainbow in the sky.
So was it when my life began—"*

When he was sworn at by a man,
Who, though few words your sportsman wastes,
Hinted he had "no country tastes."
Abashed, our startled nature-lover,
Aware of golf links and of covert,
Retreated down the nearest lane,
(Keeping the path) and took the train.
Arrived in town, once more he drew
His poet forth and looked him through:
"Earth hath not anything—" but ere
The line is read he hears "Take care"
And knocks against a friend of his.
The friend picks up the book, "What's this?"
"The very houses seem asleep "
"Why, so do you,—you ought to keep "
"Outside the radius! You must own"
"You haven't any taste for town."
"Why don't you seek your element? "
One can but wonder where he went.

A Fable.

Policeman (shepherding the throng)
“Keep to one side please, pass along.”

East St. (log.)

“Thou, booted thick with triple sole,
Pavementing thine own patrol,
Thy spreading Bluchers gall our kibes,
Thy spreading palm engulfs the bribe ;
Thou hireling of the coward rich
Whose beat will suffer no man’s ‘pitch.’
Thou priest of virtue, who hast none.
Thou runner-in of everyone.
Overfed watchdog of the Great,
Blue post of a pillared State—”

West St. (log.).

“Purblind, leaden-footed wight
Who slumb’rest upright all the night,
Thou Perjury in blue array
Who swearest falsely all the day.
Thou kill-joy o’ the midnight raid
Thou trapper of the motor trade.
Who walkst invisible when sought,
Who tak’st the felon—when he’s caught—”
Policeman (mildly mystified)
“Pass along there, please, keep one side.”

Gog and Magog out of Town.

I took my way by Round-the-Hills,
Its through a little alley,
And walked along a slope's green sills
That led along a valley.

And opposite the Virgin's Well
Which consecrates the sward Hers,
I crossed myself, for strange to tell,
Uprose those Ancient Warders.

They seem to guard, as high they stand,
An entry—or an exit ;
But way is free on either hand,
No hedge or paling checks it.

They stand, a prehistoric dump,
And gaze across to Rother,
Who winds his way past Bishop's Clump
Slow as a sloth—and slother.

And sulks, and lets his waters stay
To mirror humble Shopham,
And envies Arun's right of way
Beneath that Bridge at Stopham.

Gog and Magog out of Town

The gate they guard is open space,
Nor pierces wall nor quickset ;
Nor entrance gives on any place
That ever saw a brick set.

Its avenue is yet a glade
Behind the Giant's gateway ;
Its road yet waits its General Wade ;
The path can't take a straight way.

Maybe, when Mary made her own
This well among the heathen,
All stubborn giants turned to stone
Who would not bend the knee then.

If that's not true, then why they are
Upon that elevation,
And how they travelled down so far
I know no explanation.







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